

Fine Arts - Theatre Course Descriptive Guide Kindergarten [1997]

Course Description

The curriculum is written to aid the teacher and student to facilitate the learning of theatre as an art form. Four standards are included: playmaking, acting, understanding art forms (not introduced until fourth grade), analyzing and constructing meanings (not introduced until fourth grade). One, two, three, or all four standards may be addressed in every theatre lesson plan. In theatre, the emphasis is always on engaging the child in-role through the four essential processes of planning, playing, examining, and evaluating. Theatre classes may last from 15 to 90 minutes based on grade level, amount of curriculum integration, and complexity of lesson planning ranging from simple drama exercises to fully developed classroom dramatizations (which may take days or weeks to complete). Although sharing theatre work within a class or occasionally with other classes is an acceptable part of the process at all grade levels, staging plays for public audiences is NOT a priority, especially prior to the fourth grade.

Core Standards of the Course

TOPIC: Playmaking

STANDARD:

The student will plan and improvise plays based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history for informal and formal theatre.

OBJECTIVES:

Plan, with the teacher, actions for a character that make sense considering the given circumstances of a story.

- Plan and pantomime the actions of a major character in a story as the teacher tells or reads it aloud.

Strategy Example:

Begin with the Three Little Pigs. Ask students how they might plan to pantomime the second little pig gathering sticks and making a stick house. Individually, but simultaneously with the rest of the class, have students pantomime their planning as you tell or read the story.

- Plan and pantomime actions for a sign-puppet representing a major character in a story as you tell or read it aloud.

Strategy Example:

Ask students how many have seen a giraffe and ask them what a giraffe looks like. Show them a picture while drawing attention to specific features: eyes, ears, tail, leg, neck, spots, etc. Have students make a giraffe, with one arm being the neck and the hand of that same arm being the head. This is called a sign-puppet. Find or make up a story about a giraffe and have the students plan and then pantomime the actions (individually but simultaneously with the rest of the class) with their sign-puppet while the story is told or read aloud by you.

Plan sounds and physical attributes for a character that makes sense considering the given circumstances of a story.

- Plan and imitate the sounds and movements of animals.

Strategy Example:

Ask the students what kind of animals live in homes as pets? What animals

live on a farm? What sounds do each of them make? How do they move? Individually, but simultaneously with the rest of the class, have students select one animal and have them begin to plan and then to move and make sounds as that animal. Have them try it several times, choosing a new animal each time.

- Plan and imitate, in pairs, the sounds and movements of circus animals.

Strategy Example:

Ask students what kinds of animals travel with a circus? What kind of sounds do they make and how do they move? In pairs, have students move like two circus animals in a parade. Have students, in pairs, plan and improvise a scene with movement and sound, demonstrating one circus act.

TOPIC: Acting

STANDARD:

A student will cooperate, imagine and assume roles, explore personal preferences and meanings, and interact in classroom dramatizations.

OBJECTIVES:

Develop body awareness and spatial perception through movement and pantomime.

- Move isolated body parts. (See Dance Core.)

Strategy Example:

Have students pretend they are puppets controlled by strings, and you, in-role as Master Puppeteer, have control of the strings.

- Adjust rhythm of walking to given circumstances.

Strategy Example:

Have students, individually but simultaneously with the rest of the class, pretend they are walking on a sunny day, through a scary room, up a lot of steps, walking on tiptoes so no one hears, etc. (See Dance Core.)

- Pantomime potential future occupations.

Strategy Example:

Have the students pantomime their chosen occupations by demonstrating tasks related to specific occupations. Repeat the pantomimes, but this time add a problem to solve; e.g., an astronaut gets lost in space, a fireman runs out of water.

- Pantomime the concept of big and small living things.

Strategy Example:

Ask students what is the smallest living thing they can think of? What does a mosquito do? How does it move? How are giraffes and elephants similar and different? How do they move? In pairs, have students create movement and appropriate actions for one very large and one very small living thing. Have students pantomime the two animals trying to live in the same place.

Develop expressive use of the voice.

- Create appropriate animal sounds for a familiar story with the voice. (See Music Core.)

Strategy Example:

Have students, as a class, make the sounds of the animals as you and the students sing Old MacDonald. Then divide the students into fours and have each group make the sounds of one kind of animal when it comes their turn in the song.

- Create animal sounding dialogue.

Strategy Example:

Have students, in small groups as one kind of animal, respond to you when you interview them in-role as a news reporter. The students will be in-role as animals. Ask them questions about life as a certain kind of animal. Students will answer in short phrases and sentences while sounding like the animal they are pretending to be. Break into pairs and repeat activity with one student being the animal and one being the news reporter. Reverse roles and repeat again.